



April 7, 2021

Rhode Island State House of Representatives
Finance Committee

Re: Testimony in **support** of **H 5672**

Dear Chairman Abney:

The Rhode Island Parent Information Network, Inc. (RIPIN) thanks the House Finance Committee for the opportunity to **support H 5672: Child Care**. Since 1991, RIPIN has been supporting families with children with special needs. We have evolved over the last 30 years and now support families and individuals across the lifespan. As a peer-led organization, over three-fourths of our staff are parents or caregivers of a loved one with special needs, connecting our staff to our clients and our mission. RIPIN Peers advocate every day for services and systems that will meet the needs of the communities we serve.

Childcare is a critical need in the community, especially for parents raising children with disabilities. In 2020, RIPIN Peers had over 600 conversations with parents and caregivers about gaining access to childcare for their son or daughter with special needs. We have had nearly 300 of these conversations already this year.

RIPIN is grateful for the bill sponsors' efforts to strengthen Rhode Island's Child Care Assistance. We look forward to continuing to work with them and the members of this committee to explore opportunities to strengthen our economy and workforce.

Sincerely,

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